

**Slimewater Creek Density Management  
Environmental Assessment  
South River Field Office  
EA # OR-105-99-13**

Date Prepared: October 23, 2001

**Decision Documentation**

**Decision:** It is my decision to implement Alternative 2 of the EA, and apply density management treatments to 118 acres of mid-seral forest. The project area is located in Section 27, T. 30 S., R. 4 W. and Section 9, T. 31 S., R. 4 W., W.M., within the South Umpqua River/Galesville Late-Successional Reserve (map attached). These treatments are designed to mimic natural disturbances to the forest environment, as described in the EA (p. 5), and maintain tree species diversity that would otherwise be lost through suppression mortality. The project will also accelerate development of late-successional habitat characteristics (p. 2) for the northern spotted owl and associated old-growth dependent species.

Alternative 2, the action alternative, initially proposed treatment of 204 acres. The reduction in the final acreage authorized for treatment is the result of the establishment of six habitat areas for the Oregon red tree vole (*Arborimus longicaudus*). These areas were established to protect 15 active sites containing 40 individual nest trees. The habitat areas encompass 71 acres and resulted in the direct removal of 47 acres that were analyzed for treatment in the EA. Another 39 acres that were analyzed for treatment were eliminated because they became operationally inaccessible.

There will be no temporary or permanent road construction. Access will be provided by renovating approximately 2.2 miles of roads in existence from previous management entries. The renovation consists of approximately 0.75 miles of Road No. 30-4-27.1, 0.28 miles of Road No. 30-4-27.2, 0.29 miles of Road No. 30-4-27.3, 0.62 miles of Road No. 31-4-9.1, 0.08 miles of Road No. 31-4-9.3, and four unnumbered spur roads totaling 0.24 miles. The renovation of Road No. 30-4-27.3, shown on the attached maps, will require the cutting of 28 trees in an area approximately one acre in size. The renovated portion of Road No. 31-4-9.3 will be surfaced with aggregate upon completion of density management. All of the unnumbered spurs will be sub-soiled, and the renovated segments of Road Nos. 30-4-27.1 and 30-4-27.2, and renovated portions of Road Nos. 30-4-27.3 and 31-4-9.1 will be seeded and blocked to traffic upon project completion.

In order to reduce the likelihood of the introduction or spread of noxious weeds into the project area, pressure washing or steam cleaning of all logging and road building equipment will be required prior to being moved into the sale area, or at any time when the equipment is removed from the area and later returned.

All coarse woody material presently on-site is reserved. Existing snags will be reserved and protected with untreated buffers where they do not pose a safety risk or compromise the objectives of the project. Snags that require felling for safety reasons will be retained on-site as coarse woody material. Levels of coarse woody debris and numbers of snags per acre will be monitored over the next five years. Additional trees may be girdled or cut if needed to meet the coarse wood and snag objectives described in the EA and the South Umpqua River/Galesville Late-Successional Reserve Assessment. The marking prescription for the treatments has anticipated this need and retained additional trees for this purpose.

Approximately 60 acres of hand piling and pile burning are proposed, to reduce fire hazard and facilitate conifer underplanting. Actual acreage will be determined in a post-treatment review.

### **Rationale for the Decision:**

This decision is based upon the following:

The Roseburg District *Record of Decision/Resource Management Plan* (ROD/RMP June, 1995) provides the following guidance for the management of Late-Successional Reserves.

1. "Protect and enhance conditions of late-successional and old-growth forest ecosystems, which serve as habitat for late-successional and old-growth forest related species including the northern spotted owl and marbled murrelet." (p. 29)
2. "Design projects to improve conditions for wildlife if they provide late-successional habitat benefits . . ." (p. 38)
3. "Silvicultural practices within reserves will be limited to those practices beneficial to the creation of late-successional forest conditions and would include reforestation, maintenance and protection of existing young stands, density management, and fertilization. In addition to practices that put or maintained stands on desired developmental pathways, practices designed to restore forest condition (forest health) and other practices designed to reduce the risks of stand loss will be done to maintain long-term habitat viability." (p. 153)

Alternative 2 is consistent with the Management Action/Direction described above, and will meet landscape and stand level management objectives contained in the South Umpqua River/Galesville Late-Successional Reserve Assessment, as described in the EA (pp. 3-4). The "no action" alternative, Alternative 1 would not achieve these objectives.

### **Public Comment:**

Comments and questions on this analysis were received from two organizations. The comments were considered to have been satisfactorily addressed and considered in the EA. There was no new information that would change the conclusions of the analysis.

The BLM conferred with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on the potential effects of this project on the northern spotted owl, as described in the EA. In a Letter of Concurrence dated

May 31, 2001, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service agreed with the BLM determination that the action may affect, but was not likely to adversely affect the northern spotted owl, noting that the project is designed to “. . . develop late successional stand conditions.”, and would not remove any suitable nesting, roosting and foraging habitat. Project design features will be implemented to minimize the potential for disturbance.

There are no fish species in the project area that are listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act. There is no Essential Fish Habitat in the immediate project area. Seasonal restriction of yarding and hauling operations to the period between July 15<sup>th</sup> and October 1<sup>st</sup> is expected to reduce the potential for activity generated sediments that could affect downstream water quality. Road renovation and the specified road closures are expected to result in long-term reductions in sediment at the drainage scale. As a consequence, no adverse affect on Essential Fish Habitat is expected.

**Compliance and Monitoring:**

As identified in the EA (p. 41), monitoring will be done in accordance with requirements in the ROD/RMP, Appendix I (p. 84, 190-192, & 194-199). Monitoring will be specific to the following resources: Riparian Reserves; Late-Successional Reserves; Air Quality; Water and Soils; Wildlife Habitat; Fish Habitat; and Special Status and SEIS Special Attention Species Habitat.

**Protest and Appeals Procedures:** As outlined in 43 CFR § 5003 - Administrative Remedies, under § 5003.3 (a) and (b), protests may be made within 15 days of the publication date of the first notice of sale in the Roseburg, Oregon *News Review*. Protests shall be filed with the authorized officer and contain a written statement of reasons for protesting the decision.

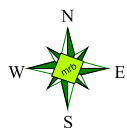
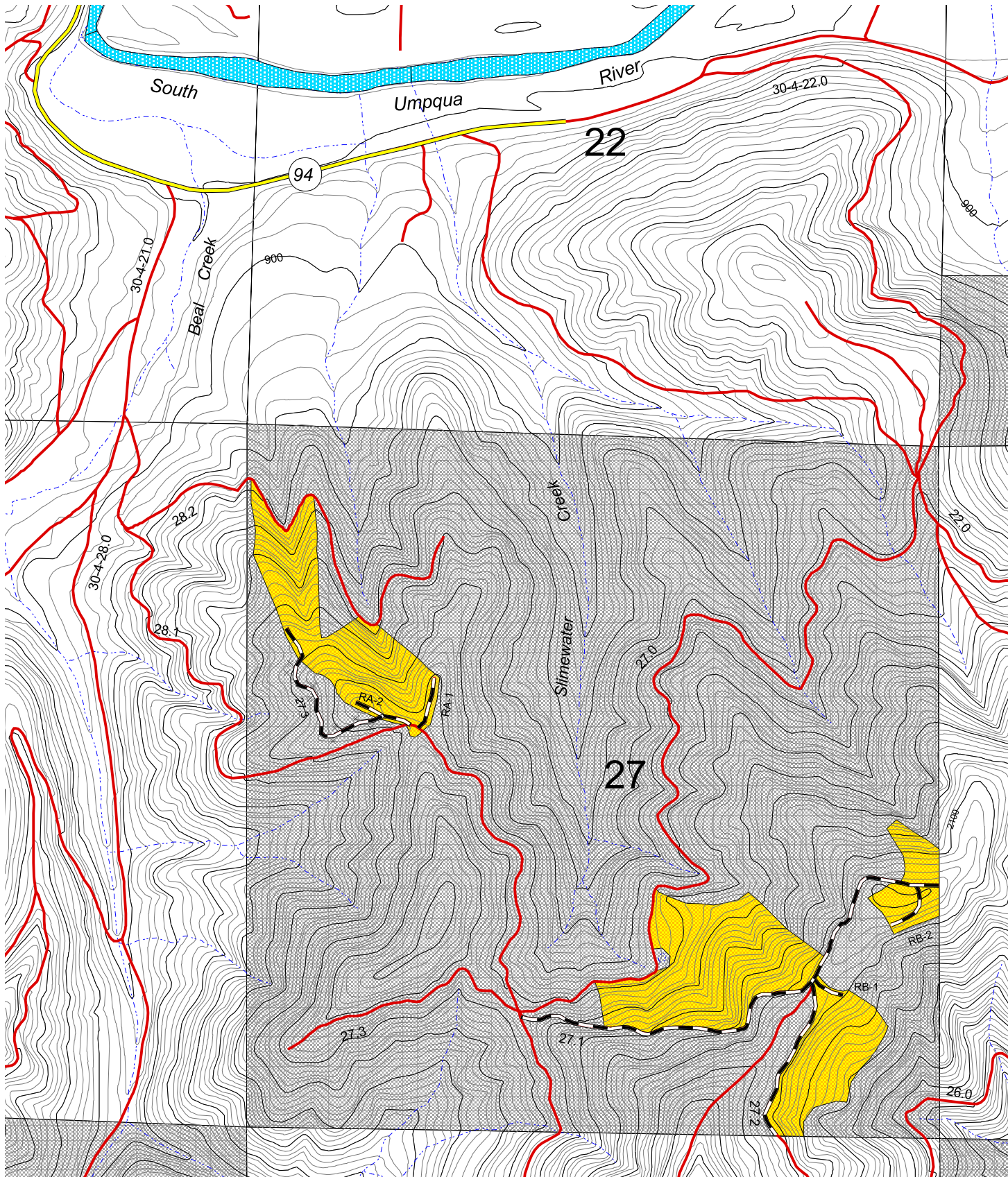
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E. Dwight Fielder  
Field Manager  
South River Field Office

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Date

# SLIMEWATER DENSITY MANAGEMENT PROJECT



T30S R4W

Willamette Meridian, Roseburg, OR.

1000 0 1000 Feet

No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of this data for individual or aggregate use with other data. Original data was compiled from various sources. This information may be updated without notification.

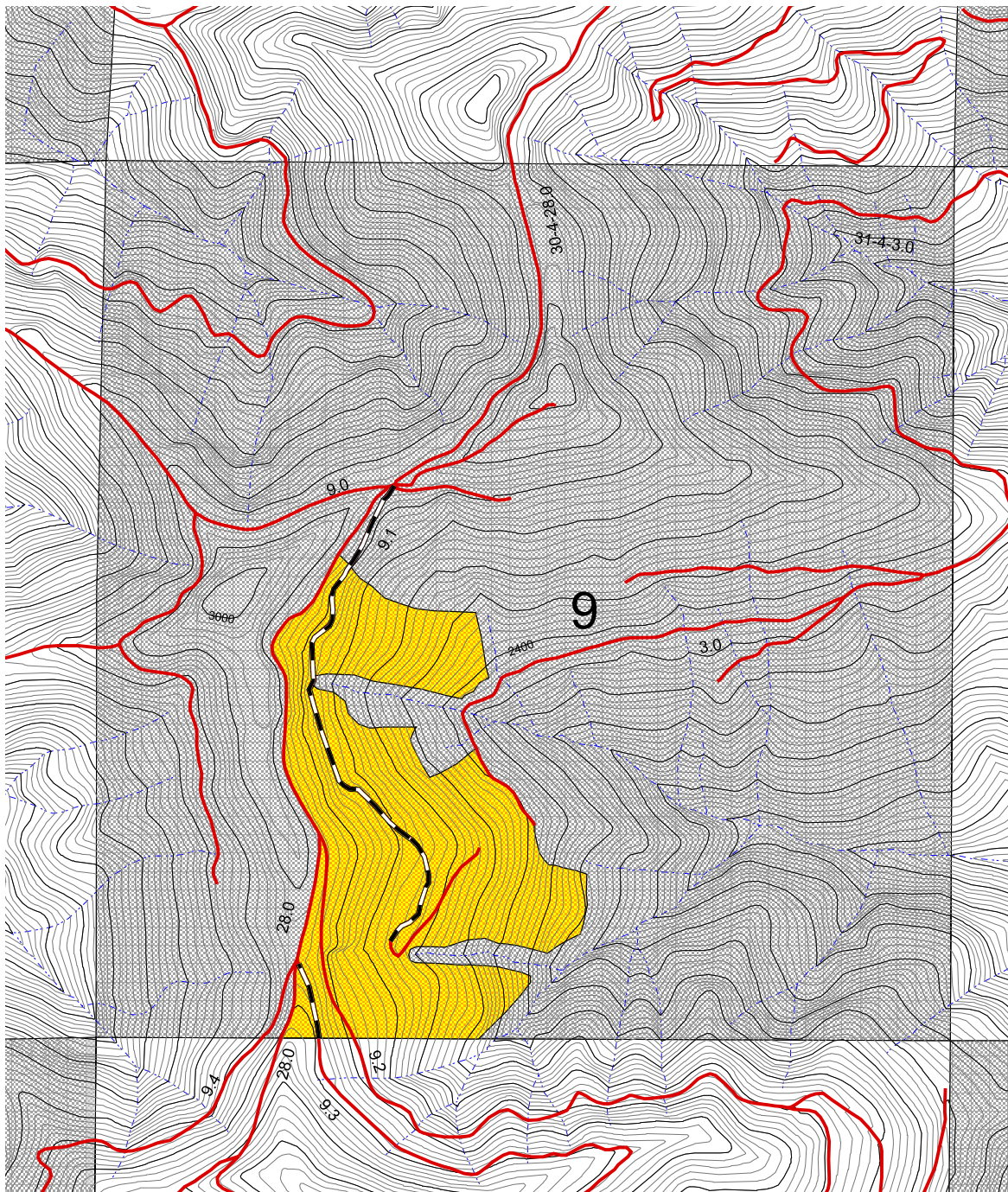


- Trees Marked For Cutting
- Stream
- Paved Highway
- Existing Road
- Road To Be Renovated
- 100' Contour
- 20' Contour

- Thinning Area
- O&C Land
- Private Land



# SLIMEWATER DENSITY MANAGEMENT PROJECT



T31S R4W

Willamette Meridian, Roseburg, OR.

1000 0 1000 Feet

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